

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, January 6, 1880, with transcript

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL TO MABEL (Hubbard) BELL Tremont House, Boston, Tuesday, Jan. 6th, 1880. My Darling May:

I never put a letter of yours into the wastepaper basket in my life—and it would be a shame to do so for such sweet lovely letters as you write I never saw in my life.

I wish I could scribble honey as you do!—It takes me an age to write anything readable.

I went to Hovey's as directed and bought a very handsome Bretonne Lace fichu for you which I duly handed to Charlie for Mamma. I also purchased for her a graduated Hearing Tube—as she lost the one I gave her a year or so ago—and she really has no tube now with which she can hear. Charlie leaves this evening at six o'clock and is now busy packing up.

We were so tired yesterday after our sleepless ride in the cars that we did not get up till eleven o'clock so we had rather a short day before us. We saw your Uncle Eustis for a few minutes and he told me that he had sold five more shares at \$900.00 leaving only three of the fifty we gave him unsold. I introduced Charlie to everybody and I think he is pretty certain to have some position offered to him. We went to hear Dion Boucicault in the Shangraun last night and were much delighted.

It is rarely the case—at least out of Hungary (?)—that a good actor is well supported—but in this case the support was admirable. Warren and a number of other good actors taking the subordinate parts.

Today I looked at my marriage settlement which I have not seen since I signed it.

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By they bye it was not the marriage settlement I saw—but the 2 Declaration of Trust signed by your father—and I find that in one very important particular it is different from what I had supposed.

I was under the impression that we could not touch the income from the Trust Fund until it had accumulated to a sum of \$200,000. This is a mistake. You are to receive all the income every year unless it amounts to more than \$3000.00 per annum.

Whatever there may be over that amount is to be put to the capital of the Trust Fund until it has accumulated to the required sum. Thus the interest of the money already invested belongs to you now—so that you have quite a handsome little sum you may spend if you want to.

The interest on the 7000 W. S. 4 ½ per cent Bonds alone amounts to \$315.00 per annum. This Fact strengthens me in the feeling that we should not pay the expenses of your father's trip out of the money that is bringing us in income—but out of the capital that is at present unproductive. The \$5000.00 in your father's hands should bring us in \$250.00 per annum—and I do not see why you should lose that amount of income.

The income due you from the U. S. Bonds in Mr. Morgan's hands must amount to about \$630.00 or about £125. I propose that we authorize Mr. Morgan to pay the bills still remaining unpaid in England out of that money and forward the remainder to you. I do not know what your father had done about it yet—but shall speak to him as soon as possible about it.

I must write a tremendous letter of apology to the Grossmanne—for I rather think that Maurice telegraphed them to expect us. This shall be my first duty after Charlie's departure.

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I am really quite shocked to see the mental change in Mr. McCurdy. He is evidently fast breaking up—I cannot think of him without bringing to mind those beautiful lines of Sir Walter Scott:

“Time rolls his ceaseless course—The race of yore who danced our infancy upon their knee, and told our wondering childhood legends store of this strange ventures happed by land or sea— how are they blotted from the things that be!

How few—all weak and withered of their force—await—like stranded wrecks—the tide returning hoarse—to sweep them from our sight. Time rolls his ceaseless course.”

Poor Mr. McCurdy—I doubt whether he knew who I was. Mr. Marsh has been obliged to have a private table on account of the way the people at the Grosvenor were talking about Mr. McCurdy. You poor dear darling little girl—I want to go home right off. I can't bear to be away from you. Many thanks for your lovely letter. I expect to leave tomorrow night for Washington. How is my little Elsie—with oceans of love for you both—and plenty for all in the K Street home.

Your loving husband, Alec.